Old vs young tools

I don't want to suggest that there's a formula, but in many cases, I find  
that beginning with a historical approach defuses some of the emotional  
baggage. I usually begin by pointing out that there are no creeds of the  
historical church, and no doctrinal statements prior to 1900 that involve a  
particular view of the when of creation. It is NOT a doctrine of true,  
historical Christianity. I then say something like, "I know of at least 15  
different interpretations of Genesis 1 that are held or that have been held  
by Christians committed to the authority, inspiration, and even inerrancy  
of Scripture. And only two of these 15 entail a belief in a young creation  
(on the order of a few thousand years); the others either allow for or  
demand a much greater age for the Earth and universe." This approach has  
helped me gain a footing without immediately putting the other(s) into a  
defensive position.

John. I am part of an evangelical church and it is  
almost exclusively YE. I am having a lot of success in bringing in the idea of  
an old earth. Here is how I am doing it.   
1) I went to all of the pastors and  
asked them about this issue. Not just this issue, but I asked them about  
several issues and I wanted to know  
where they stood.   
2) I told them that I was OE and that I do not see this as a salvific  
issue. They agreed. If they did not I would have asked them for their Biblical  
evidence saying that it is a salvific issue.   
3) I teach a class on apologetics  
and I was asked, by my adult students, to teach specifically on evolution. The  
reason for this I kept mentioning that there are at least six types of  
evolution in my talks. They wanted to know what I was talking about. This topic  
brings in the age of the earth through the side door. Meaning that I do not  
address it directly, but it is obvious that the age of the earth matters to the  
topic of evolution.   
4) these are one hour classes, and I spent the first 3-4  
classes going over the attributes of God and how we can know Him. The two book  
theory of how God has revealed Himself to us, that God is omniscient, and part  
of that omniscience is that God is about the truth. If we are seeking the truth  
we are seeking Him. It does not matter what the truth is, what is important  
that we do our very best to try to find out what the truth is. Everyone was OK  
with this as we all think that we have the truth behind us in our ideas.   
5) I then  
spent the next 6-8 weeks on the definitions of the types of evolution and on  
the evidences for them. So for example I went over the three types of evolution  
that Darwin proposed. First was change over time. I explained what Darwin meant  
by it, quoted Darwin, showed the evidences for it, most of which we  
observational and scientific in nature and then questions from my adult  
students. Rinse and repeat. FYI Macro evolution took me 4 or 5 weeks to go  
over, explain, and then point out the errors/impossibility of it. I could have  
done more but I feel that I went into too much detail as is for most people.   
6)  
Everyone is on board so far, but as I was discussing macro evolution, some YEC  
people started to get worried and anxious. Why? Classes earlier I went over  
what a mutation is and the rate of which they happen among other things. All  
agreed that it is impossible to happen. Then several classes later the same  
data makes it obvious that ‘super’ evolution after the Noah’s ark landed could  
not have happened naturally. Of course God could have intervened and had the  
animals change/mutate at a very fast rate, but wouldn’t something this important  
be mentioned in the bible?   
7) So I’m not quite done with the evolution topic. I  
finished macro evolution and am going onto a few other types. What I keep saying  
is that it does not matter which one of us is right, just so that we are genuinely  
seeking the truth, honestly and intelligently, we are pleasing God.   
   
FYI if my  
students were able to prove to me that YEC is true, I would become a YEC  
believer. I truly do mean it when I say that I am after the truth.  
   
  
   
So that’s how I am getting OE into my YEC church.  
I plan on making videos of my classes and having them critiqued by the RTB  
volunteer group. I just haven’t found the time to do so. I plan on teaching  
this, and other apologetic, subjects to other groups in and outside of my  
church and I want to make sure that what I am saying is biblically and  
scientifically sound.

--You also might be interested in an article "The Evolution of Creationism" that was published in GSA Today (Geological Society of American), November 2012. As noted in the article, "The roots of modern creationism run directly back to George McCready Price (1870-1963) . . ." MODERN YECism is NOT an orthodox position dating from early Christianity, but rather a philosophy that dates back less than 200 years to the mid-1800s.   
   
Actually, George McCready Price got his ideas from Ellen G White (1827-1915), prophetess of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, who taught “Noah’s flood had sculpted the surface of the earth, burying the plants and animals found in the fossil record." White fell into trances where she claimed to have actually witnessed the six-day creation. Therefore, Modern YECism dates back no further than the mid-1800s and is rooted in the "divine visions" of Ellen G White, adapted by her protege George McCready Price, whose work was then taken over by Whitcomb and Morris in their book, The Genesis Flood in the early 1960s.  
   
An excellent book on the subject is The Creationists by Ronald Numbers.